



Morningside Church

Sermon Discussion Guide

Title: Living the Abundant Life

Date: June 28, 2026

Scripture Text: 2 Corinthians 4:7-15

Notes:

We have all been in situations where we felt we failed God by saying the wrong thing or we were concerned that we offended someone as we witnessed to them. Paul in today's passage shares that his weaknesses and failures existed to demonstrate God's glory. This gave Paul further confidence in the gospel and encouragement to persevere despite these difficulties. Our job is to respond to God in obedience and trust Him with the outcome. Let's take a look at what characteristics are required to be successful at this...

I. Humility (2 Cor. 4:7)

Paul describes us as "earthen vessels", or "clay jars". The priceless gospel ministry is carried about in delicate containers. As strong as we may think we are, we are but fragile vessels. God uses ordinary people to do the extraordinary. God is not looking for SUPER Saints, but SURRENDERED Saints.

- Paul, who arguably could be considered the most influential Christian to ever live was also one of the most humble. Describe ways Paul demonstrated his humility?
- Pride is many times described at the opposite of humility. What dangers does pride introduce when it comes to spreading the gospel?
- How are we reminded at times of our frailties?
- How can we make sure we don't use our frailties as an excuse to 'check out' from participating in the Christian life?
- J. Hudson Taylor said, "All God's giants have been weak men who reckoned on the power of God to do great things." What are examples of some of God's giants?
- What does it mean to "reckon the power of God"?
- How can you practice 'reckoning' the power of God?

II. Persistence (2 Cor. 4:8-9)

These verses contain four pairs of opposites. The first element of each pair characterizes people in service to God. The second element gives evidence of God's power. These reflect the vulnerability of Paul and his co-laborers on the one hand and the power of God which sustained them on the other.

- "Afflicted in every way, but not crushed". While God allowed Paul to be afflicted/hard pressed, by His power He did not allow him to be completely crushed.
 - When was a time when you felt hard pressed, yet experienced God's protection from being completely crushed?



Morningside Church

Sermon Discussion Guide

Notes:

- “Perplexed, but not despairing”. These are times when you’re at your wits end. At a total loss, but by God’s power are not lost. You may not know what to do, but you know Who does!
 - What does it mean to be at wits end?
 - Even though you may be at a loss, what does it look like to trust in the One who has the answer?
- “Persecuted, but not forsaken”. While Paul was often persecuted in the course of his ministry, and experienced abandonment from his co-laborers at times, he was never abandoned by God.
- “Struck down, but not destroyed”. Paul may be referring to physical violence he experienced, but insisted that even so, God had not allowed him to perish.

These ‘opposites’ are simply saying: you will have difficulties, but don’t give up. Trust God! He will make sure His work through you is accomplished ([Phil. 1:6](#)).

III. Sacrifice (2 Cor. 4:10-12)

In His humanity Jesus was subject to death; by God’s power He was raised to life. Paul (and indeed all Christians) should follow Jesus’ example. Paul’s trials as a minister led ultimately to his experiencing death; however, his trials were also instrumental in bringing spiritual life to the Corinthians.

- How would you define sacrifice?
- What are examples of those in the New Testament who sacrificed for Jesus?
- How have you sacrificed for Jesus?

Even if it is not a life-threatening situation, we can all make sacrifices for Jesus, with the goal of Him being glorified by our sacrificial actions. Jesus should always be the reason and the focus of any sacrifice we make, not us.

IV. Conviction (2 Cor. 4:13-14)

Paul is making a point that trust in the Lord motivates a person to action. That action includes speaking to others of our belief in Christ.

- How can we be convicted to share our faith more?
- What does it say about our walk with God if we are not convicted to share about Christ with others?

V. Worshipful (2 Cor. 4:15)

Paul states that his ministry and suffering was to encourage the Corinthian Christians as they experienced the grace of God. “For all things are for your sakes, so that grace, having spread to more and more people, will cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.” Our actions for Christ should point others to Him and not ourselves.